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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 07 OTTAWA 001122

SIPDIS

STATE FOR SCA/FO N. KROMASH AND SCA/A N SINGH

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TAGS: PREL MOPS NATO EAID AF PK CA

SUBJECT: CANADA SEEKS U.S. SUPPORT FOR AFGHAN-PAKISTAN BORDER ACTION PLAN

REF: OTTAWA 704

Classified By: PolMinCouns Scott Bellard, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C//Rel Can) Summary: Canada has shared with Embassy a draft of the Dubai Process's yet-to-be approved Pakistan-Afghanistan Cooperation Action Plan (PACAP) to improve security and efficiency along the two countries' shared borders and legal crossing points. After the final Dubai Process meeting, probably in October 2008, the Canadians will formally seek U.S. political and financial support for high-priority PACAP projects, such as the Weish-Chaman crossing point near Spin Boldak. Canada now hopes that the USG will move quickly to consider and fund key elements in FY 2009, but Afghan and Pakistani officials likely would be offended if they became aware that Canada had made this draft available to the USG before gaining their final approvals. End summary.

Canadians Seek U.S. Support for PACAP Projects

¶2. (C//Rel Can) On August 19, Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Afghanistan Task Force Regional Policy Adviser Rhett Sangster briefed pol/miloff on the current draft of the Canadian-sponsored Dubai Process' Pakistan-Afghanistan Cooperation Action Plan (PACAP). The PACAP is designed to strengthen control and efficiency along the two countries' shared border crossing points, Sangster said. Canada hopes to persuade the U.S., and other key partners to support and fund priority elements of the action plan (reftel).

¶3. (C//Rel Can) Canada intends to convey the action plan to Afghanistan and Pakistan for approval soon, according to Sangster, most likely in October when, after numerous delays, the fifth and final Dubai Process workshop is tentatively scheduled to occur. Sangster added that he is "highly confident" that the document will be approved in its current form at the final workshop. Despite its "very rough edges," Sangster said, the PACAP tracks with the results of the four preparatory meetings in which Afghan and Pakistani officials agreed to "typically vague but actionable" language calling for both sides to improve controls along their shared border areas and crossing points.

¶4. (C//Rel Can) Although he declined to speculate about Canadian funding levels, Sangster said that he expects his government to provide "considerable" support to key PACAP initiatives, including the \$16.5 million Weish-Chaman immigration and customs (border) crossing point project near Spin Boldak. He noted that the Weish-Chaman initiative is a scaled-down version of the successful project at Shirkham

Bandar in northern Afghanistan. The Canadian government expects to draw from its annual \$300 million-plus in aid and security funding for Afghanistan to fund significant elements of the Weish-Chaman crossing and other particularly high priority projects, Sangster confirmed, but is seeking "capable and nimble partners like the U.S." to share the burden. Sangster speculated that the project might have particular appeal to the U.S. military, as more and more of U.S. forces move into Kandahar Province near Spin Boldak.

¶5. (C//Rel Can) Sangster admitted that senior Canadian officials had allowed him to share the "almost final" version of the plan with the U.S. at this point specifically in order to ensure that it receives consideration early in the USG's FY 2009 planning and funding processes. He asked Embassy Ottawa to convey it to the Departments of State (INL and USAID) and Defense, as well as appropriate civilian and military elements of the U.S. missions in Afghanistan and Pakistan, in the hope that headquarters and field personnel would collaborate with Canada, and other key partners, in advancing the PACAP. Sangster underscored, however, that he was sharing the PACAP only with the U.S. at this point, and warned that Afghan and Pakistani officials would be offended if they became aware that Canada had made it available to the USG before gaining their final approvals. The Afghans and Pakistanis will not see the document until shortly before the final Dubai Process meeting occurs, probably in October, he noted.

DRAFT ACTION PLAN

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¶6. (SBU/Rel Can) Draft text of Pakistan-Afghanistan Cooperation Action Plan (PACAP):

QUOTE:

In keeping with the Foreign Ministers of Afghanistan and Pakistan G8 Foreign Ministers' Potsdam Statement (May 2007), and in the spirit of support for the Peace Jirga, Pakistani and Afghan senior officials met in November 2007 in Dubai and jointly identified five non-binding high-priority operational areas where greater cooperation between Afghanistan and Pakistan would contribute to increased stability, security and economic development:

- (1) Connecting Government to the People through Social and Development;
- (2) Customs (trade facilitation and transit, revenue collection);
- (3) Managing the Movement of People;
- (4) Law enforcement; and,
- (5) Counter-Narcotics.

At follow-up discussions in Murree on May 5-8, 2008 and Kabul on May 27-30, 2008, Pakistani and Afghan senior officials jointly developed a set of recommendations to improve the capacity and cooperation of Afghan and Pakistani officials.

On July 23-24, at the Dubai Policy Level Summary Workshop, Afghan and Pakistani senior officials outlined the following plan for implementation of these non-binding but mutually advantageous recommendations. The Governments of Pakistan, Afghanistan and Canada will work together with donor and international actors such as the G8, the UN, NATO and others, to ensure coordinated and concrete responses to the plan outlined below.

July 23-24, Dubai:

- Begin making arrangements to convene the first meetings of the Joint Working Groups on Customs and Trade ((October 6, 2008 in Islamabad)), on Counter-Narcotics Cooperation ((October 20, 2008 in Kabul)), on Managing the Movement of People ((November 3 in Islamabad)), and the Coordinating Body

on Law Enforcement ((November 17 in Kabul)). Discussions will subsequently take place at least quarterly, will be financed and facilitated by Canada, and will focus on concrete and actionable ways to build capacity and cooperation between Afghan and Pakistani departments and agencies.

- Report on specific requirements for a bilateral customs-to-customs agreement between Afghanistan and Pakistan, using the World Customs Organization (WCO) template. Develop a timetable aimed at concluding an agreement by summer 2009.
- Present a list of development priority sectors and potential projects, based on the following three categories, to be presented to the G8 and other international donors as appropriate, including through the G8 Afghan-Pakistani Initiative Coordination Arrangement:

- ¶1. Needs to be addressed through national measures and mechanisms, such as increased quality of and access to education and health services;
- ¶2. Common needs to be addressed with the assistance of a common development partner/agency, such as cooperation between WHO and both governments to eradicate polio; and
- ¶3. Mutually agreed areas requiring joint action by both governments.

July, 2008:

- Begin to open crossing points seven days per week, from thirty minutes after sunrise, until thirty minutes before sunset.

Autumn 2008:

- Present and begin coordinating the international response to capacity needs identified in the Pakistan-Afghanistan Cooperation Action Plan at a meeting of the G8 Afghanistan-Pakistani Initiative Coordination Arrangement, as QAfghanistan-Pakistani Initiative Coordination Arrangement, as agreed to by G8 Foreign Ministers in July 2008 in Toyaka. Some of the capacity needs identified by Pakistani and Afghan officials include:

-- Provision to customs, law enforcement and anti-narcotic

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departments and agencies, as well as of relevant ministries and agencies involved in managing the movement of people, of needed latest equipment and training, including detection equipment and infrastructure;

-- Options for joint training of Pakistani and Afghan customs, counter-narcotics and law enforcement officials as well as those officials managing the movement of people, at mutually agreed venues. UNHCR, IOM and UNODC good would also be used, to help with training in such issues as managing the movement of people, and investigative techniques and precursor interdiction;

-- Establish, upgrade and expand access to drug treatment centers for addicts and affected families;

-- Establishment of Centres of Excellence in respective countries to conduct research on drug treatment and related issues;

-- Investment in projects to foster alternative livelihoods in any poppy growing regions that may exist, including improved agricultural practices and economic development; and

-- Engagement with respective ethnic tribal and religious leaders and elders to communicate and attain local and national support for government anti-narcotic efforts and efforts to curb the illegal movement of people, in coordination with the Afghanistan-Pakistan Peace Jirgas as and when mandated by those Jirgas.

- (October 6, 2008 in Islamabad): First meeting of the Customs and Trade Working Group, in support of the Joint Economic Commission, for detailed and technical discussions on how to continue enhancing cooperation between Pakistani and Afghan Customs and Trade Agencies. Potential items for

discussion in this Customs and Trade Working Group could include:

- Full modernization of the Weish-Chaman, Ghulam Khan and Torkham crossing points;
- Further study of the need for potential new legal crossing points;
- Development of a Joint Afghan-Pakistani Customs Academy;
- Updating the Afghan Trade and Transit Agreement (ATTA);
- Explore ways to curb cross border smuggling of contraband, through information sharing, and increased law enforcement activity at illegal crossing routes;
- Discussion between technical experts on how best to share electronic customs information through Data Interface (EDI), while safeguarding the integrity of the automated clearance systems of both administrations; and
- Establish a working group to plan and manage the construction of an Afghan crossing point at Weish and a Pakistani crossing point at Torkham.

- (October 20, 2008 in Kabul): First meeting of Joint Working Group on Counter-Narcotics Cooperation for detailed and technical discussions on how to continue enhancing cooperation between Pakistani and Afghan anti-narcotics forces. The Joint Working Group will be comprised of the Pakistani Anti-Narcotics Force, the Frontier Corps and the Customs Department as well as the Afghan Ministry of Counter-Narcotics, the Counter-Narcotics Police of Afghanistan, the Afghan Border Police and the Customs Department and it will strive to:

- Improve information, intelligence sharing, communications and training between Afghan and Pakistani narcotics officials;
- Inhibit the illegal shipment of precursor chemicals into Pakistan and Afghanistan, including by examining their origin and transit routes;
- Qand transit routes;
- Explore options for joint training of Afghan and Pakistani counter-narcotics officials at mutually agreed venues in such areas as investigative techniques and precursor interdiction, including through the good offices of the UNODC; and
- Coordinate exercises and activities.

- (November 3 in Islamabad): First meeting of the Joint Working Group on Managing the Movement of People for detailed and technical discussions on how to continue enhanced cooperation in order to identify cooperative mechanisms to distinguish and identify smugglers, terrorists, and traffickers from legal and legitimate travelers (including traditional tribal movements and returnee and refugee flows).

The Joint Working Group will be comprised of (Pakistani and Afghan Governments to provide participating agencies in time for Dubai workshop). Potential items for discussion in this Joint Working Group on Managing the Movement of People could include:

- Identification Cards and biometric systems;

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- Migrant Workers;
- Education/Awareness of Procedures for the Movement of People;
- Capacity needs, including identification of needs for increased support for sustainable return and reintegration of refugees;
- Security, Intelligence and "Real Time" Information Sharing;
- Legal Crossing Points.

- (November 17 in Kabul): First meeting of the Coordinating Body on Law Enforcement, consisting of the three heads of the Joint Working Groups (Customs and Trade, Counter-Narcotics, and Managing the Movement People) and other relevant departments and agencies, to meet at least biannually for detailed and technical discussions on how to continue and enhance cooperation on law enforcement, as outlined by the May 28-29, 2008 Kabul workshop on Law Enforcement (annex A).

- Begin discussions to develop mechanisms to coordinate patrolling, exercises, activities and operations to interdict

illegal travelers (similar to the UNODC-led efforts to create joint counter-narcotics centers), through the Afghanistan-Pakistan-NATO Trilateral Committee. (Note - this is slightly different to the language that was agreed to in the movement of people document, which insisted that any mechanism developed should not overlap the Trilateral Committee. With an attempt now to "reinvigorate" the Trilateral Committee, and in the interest of integrating this plan into other international efforts, we suggest proposing this amended language. Timing for discussions will need to be coordinated with ISAF/NATO).

- Update each other on the progress of respective country's biometric systems (in so far as possible, working toward mutual compatibility).

- (Update each other on progress toward the mutually agreed goal of registering the Afghan and Pakistani populations, and issuing them with national identification cards - and discussion about the planned removal in 2009/10 of the Pakistan Government issued Proof of Residency cards for Afghan refugees).

Winter 2008/09:

- Conduct first coordinated counter-narcotics exercise, in coordination with UNODC Tripartite Commission recommendations of May 7-8, 2008 (note: we will need to check with UNODC to see if the timing for the CN exercises listed in this document is realistic).

- Conduct joint education seminars for traders and brokers (business people) at each crossing point on the procedures for transit, import and export between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

- Develop information pamphlets and radio broadcasts in English, Dari, Pashto and Urdu, and work with respective country's Chambers of Commerce and the Afghanistan-Pakistan Trade and Business Council to educate business people about transit, import and export procedures.

- Conduct joint education seminars and develop information pamphlets and radio broadcasts in English, Dari, Pashto and Urdu to educate people about general procedures relating to the movement of people, including migrant workers.

- Begin language courses (English, Dari, Pashto and Urdu) for officials working at crossing points, in order to improve communication.

- Explore the establishment of Trade Facilitation Centers at crossing points and/or other regional centers to conduct many of the above activities to increase trade between Afghanistan and Pakistan;

- Explore the idea of building kiosks at crossing points for validation and processing of travel documents.

Spring 2009:

- Establish liaison offices in Spin Boldak and Chaman, staffed with representatives of the relevant immigration, interior, customs, security and counter-narcotics agencies, as it was agreed during the Triangular Initiative (Pakistan,

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Afghanistan, Iran) meeting on May 6-7, 2008 (Note - the timing of this will need to be coordinated with UNODC).

- Establish a coordination group to foster and manage institutional exchanges between Pakistani and Afghan officials and representatives, academics, business people, students, opinion leaders and policy makers.

- Welcome Afghan business people to visit and learn about the

new Pakistani port of Gwadar and inform them about the facilities made available by the Pakistani Government.

- Conduct second coordinated counter-narcotics exercise, in coordination with UNODC Tripartite Commission recommendations of May 7-8, 2008.

- Begin discussions to explore the possibility of developing a Memorandum of Understanding between the Governments of Pakistan and Afghanistan to establish procedures for facilitating regular and short-notice, ad-hoc meetings between Afghan and Pakistani officials involved in law enforcement, including officials from the immigration, customs, narcotics, interior and security ministries.

- Begin discussions to update the Afghan Trade and Transit Agreement.

- Develop Afghan and Pakistani Centers of Excellence and Academies, in accordance with efforts already underway, for building capacity in the areas of customs, counter-narcotics, law enforcement and managing the movement of people;

Summer 2009:

- Establish liaison offices at Torkham, staffed with representatives of the relevant immigration, interior, customs, security and counter-narcotics agencies, as it was agreed during the Triangular Initiative (Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran) meeting on May 6-7, 2008.

- Conclude a bilateral customs-to-customs agreement between Afghanistan and Pakistan, using the World Customs Organization template.

- Clarify the standard operating procedures for returning refugees (in accordance with the decisions of the UNHCR-Pakistan-Afghanistan Trilateral Commission), and discuss, in consultation with UNHCR, next steps to build on the tripartite consultations aimed at resolving the situation of the remaining refugees in Pakistan.

- Establish a joint Electronic Data Interface (EDI) for Afghan and Pakistani Customs Departments.

Autumn 2009:

- Conduct third coordinated counter-narcotics exercise, in coordination with I UNODC Tripartite Commission recommendations of May 7-8, 2008.

- Update each other on the progress of respective country's biometric systems (in so far as possible, working toward mutual compatibility).

- (Update each other on progress toward the mutually agreed goal of registering the Afghan and Pakistani populations, and issuing them with national identification cards).

- Begin construction of Afghan crossing point infrastructure at Weish and of Pakistani crossing point infrastructure at Torkham.

Winter 2009:

- Further clarify the definition of and procedures for managing the travel of migrant workers through discussions in the Joint Working Group on Managing the Movement of People.

Spring 2010:

- Establish a Memorandum of Understanding between the Governments of Pakistan and Afghanistan to establish procedures for facilitating regular and short-notice, ad-hoc meetings between Afghan and Pakistani officials involved in

law enforcement, including officials from the immigration, customs, narcotics, interior and security ministries;

- Conduct fourth coordinated counter-narcotics exercise, in coordination with UNODC Tripartite Commission recommendations of May 7-8, 2008. Coordinated exercises to be continued, at a frequency of no less than six months apart.

Summer 2010:

- Begin discussions to explore ways to develop a system of mutually compatible identification cards for people and vehicles frequently crossing through legal crossing points.

- Begin construction of Pakistani and Afghan crossing point infrastructure at Ghulam Khan. Infrastructure to include the establishment of liaison offices, staffed with representatives of the relevant immigration, interior, customs, security and counter-narcotics agencies, as it was agreed during the Triangular Initiative (Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran) meeting on May 6-7, 2008.

- Conclude negotiations on an updated Afghan Trade and Transit Agreement (ATTA).

Summer 2011:

- Based on needs identified by Customs and Trade Working Group and the joint Working Group on Managing the Movement of People, explore possibility of opening new legal crossing points - - Implement biometric systems in Pakistan and Afghan working toward mutual compatibility.

- Develop a system of mutually compatible identification cards for people and vehicles frequently crossing through legal crossing points.

END QUOTE.

¶7. (SBU/Rel Can) Below is a related Afghan proposal for the crossing point at Weish-Chaman that is currently under consideration by Ottawa:

QUOTE:

Proposal for developing Land Customs Stations

Effective management of border crossing is an important tool in the revenue mobilization strategy of the Government under the Action Plan prepared for the next five years. Considering the ever increasing cargo traffic emanating from Pakistan, including that for international transit to Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan, we need to therefore especially strengthen customs controls on the Afghanistan-Pakistan border to enable us to check diversion of goods enroute without payment of duty. Among various custom posts on this border, Weish and Kandahar province and Ghulam Khan in Zabol, due to their proximity to big trading centres and strategic locations need to be developed to cater to this increasing traffic.

Weish (Spin Boldak)

Presently, we have a customs border post at Spin Boldak, which handles border traffic from Chaman area in Pakistan. The goods are only registered here as transit goods and they are assessed at Quandhar Customs, which is over 60 km further inside the mainland, leaving a large scope for their diversion on the way. Spin Boldak itself is about 12 km from the border. Closer to the border, however is another point called Weish, which is barely 1.5 km from the border and would be a better location for setting up a Land Customs Station. Therefore it is proposed to have a full fledged Land Customs Station at Weish, where facilities could be developed for appraisal and clearance of goods arriving from Pakistan.

Chaman also has a railway terminal, which could be extended

to Weish for direct transportation of sea consignments from ports in Pakistan. While the issue of extension of Railway Qports in Pakistan. While the issue of extension of Railway Line to Weish may be taken up with the Government of Pakistan, looking into the future requirement, facility need to be developed at Weish for custom clearance of both rail and road cargo.

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The proposed Land Customs Station (LCS) at Weish would require following facilities-

- ¶11. Office buildings to accommodate Customs, Immigration, Border police, Health, Animal/Plant quarantine, Security officials, Bank etc. with essential furniture and cabling
- ¶12. Warehouses/godowns for storage of import and export goods, including cold storage for storing fresh fruits, meat and dairy products
- ¶13. Parking lanes and yards for incoming (Import) and outbound (Export) vehicles separately
- ¶14. Trans-shipment yard with platforms for easy unloading and loading of goods from train to trucks and vice versa
- ¶15. Examination halls/sheds for import and export cargo
- ¶16. Customs Laboratory with facilities for testing drugs, chemicals and other major commodities
- ¶17. Cafeteria, waiting lounge, Prayer Room, water supply, drainage, lighting, power and other public utilities
- ¶18. Residential quarters/barracks to accommodate customs and other officials with provision of canteen/dining room etc.
- ¶19. High boundary walls with security fencing and gates
- ¶10. Internal as well as external feeder roads connecting the LCS to the main road and highway.
- ¶11. Ample area earmarked/allocated for future development of Rail terminal as and when the Railway line is extended from Chaman.

In addition, we would also need to install various machines and equipments required in appraisement and cargo handling, such as:-

- i. Container/Truck Scanning machine
- ii. Weighing scales and weigh bridges for trucks and containers
- iii. Fork-lift trucks, overhead hoists, Container Stackers and mobile cranes for handling containers and other packages

The customs station being developed at Sherkhan Bundar at the Tajikistan border currently provides us a ready model for setting up similar facilities elsewhere. Copy of their broad layout is placed below as Annexure-I. Of course, this model would have to be adapted to suit the requirements at other places. Considering that a regional centre is already functioning at Khost, the provincial headquarters, Weish would not need it and to that extent, the space requirement would be smaller here, as compared to 700,000 square metres allocated for Sherkhan Bundar LCS and Regional Centre.

Going by above yardstick, an area of at least about 500,000 square metres would be needed for building a Land Customs Station at Weish, which may be made available by the Government. A rough estimate of the expenditure involved in developing LCS at Weish as per the above proposal comes to about 16.5 million US dollars. The broad break up of this estimation in US dollars is as follows:

Office building, warehouses, sheds, platforms, cold storage, residential quarters and other civil constructions -

\$7.5 million

Furniture and fittings - \$1.5 million

Cargo handling equipments, cranes, etc. \$2 million

Cargo scanner - \$3.5 million

Laboratory and computer equipments - \$0.5 million

Security fences and roads, etc. - \$1.5 million

Total: \$16.5 million

END QUOTE

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